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Labour, Finance and the War (being the Results of Inquiries, Arranged by the Section of Economic Science and Statistics of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, during the Years 1915 and 1916) by Adam W. Kirkaldy

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1.—*Labour, Finance and the War* (being the results of inquiries, arranged by the Section of Economic Science and Statistics of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, during the years 1915 and 1916). Edited and with a preface by Adam W. Kirkaldy, M.A., President of the Section. xviii + 344 pp., 8vo. London : Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons. Price 3s. 6d. net.

It is very fortunate that some serious thinking about economic

problems arising out of the war still continues outside government departments and committees, where all the interesting material is confidential and the analysis of principles and reasons is only manifested through the unsuitable mediums of official publications and ministerial speeches. We owe a considerable debt to the busy experts who have found time to collaborate in producing this volume. Professor Kirkcaldy's chapter entitled "Some Thoughts on "Reconstruction after the War" in effect summarises the material collected by the committee, and is a very thoughtful and well-informed analysis of the problems about which all who have any power to influence action ought to be thinking; whereas Chapters II, III, and IV (Industrial Unrest; The Replacement of Men by Women in Industry; The Effects of the War on Credit, Currency and Finance) suffer from the usual defects of construction by committee and show signs of haste in compilation, this first chapter on Reconstruction is readable, lucid and extremely useful.

The study of the change in the occupations of women is of more interest than the chapter on Credit, &c. (as to which we have gleaned from elsewhere already many opinions worthy to rank with those here expressed), and than the assemblage of not necessarily representative views on which the chapter on Industrial Unrest is based. For the government has not yet published any informative analysis of the movement of women in industry, and few people are able to observe more than a very limited part of this movement. The partial mobilisation of women is, however, the one new phenomenon of the war; we have no experience by which to judge of its permanence or its effects; and, therefore, this presentation of the facts gathered first-hand in the districts of the main industries affected is a most important contribution to a preliminary study of this very interesting factor in the evolution of industry. The numbers exhibited in the tables are, of course, rapidly falling out of date as the process of dilution is accelerated.

It will, however, probably remain true that the movement from other industries to those engaged in munitions is on a much larger scale than the introduction of women formerly not industrially employed; for the number of women unoccupied and belonging to classes permanently capable of occupation is not large, and unless domestic service is permanently denuded there is no source external to industry on which to draw on a large scale.

The question that is being worked out, especially in the engineering trades, is how far women are capable now or can with training become capable of replacing men, especially skilled men. "When women are said to be doing 'skilled' work, then, what is meant in nearly all cases is that they are doing one part of the job which a skilled man performs throughout." "The cases in which women are completely replacing men in the sense that each woman is doing the same work and the whole of the work that the men did, are, for the most part, confined to the lighter unskilled tasks." "A large proportion of the replacement of men by women has been

"made possible by some re-arrangement of methods which brings the operation within the capacity of the female worker. But this re-organization means that the woman is not completely taking the man's place" (pp. 76-7). Such is the stage that, in the opinion of the committee, had been reached in July, 1916. It is evident that, if so much has been done within two years at a time when all attention has been given to output, and training and organization have been subsidiary, we may be watching the beginning of a movement which will completely alter the division between the work of men and women with which we have been familiar. The ultimate effect on women's wages of this possible extension of the sphere of industry open to them may be very great. A.L.B.

2.—*La Richesse de la France devant la Guerre*. Par René Pupin. (Problèmes de Guerre et de Paix). 151 pp., 8vo. Paris: Marcel Rivière et Cie., 1916. Price 4 frs.

This examination into the national income and capital wealth of France immediately prior to the war is a work of importance and permanent value. The author avails himself of all possible resources in his task, and one feels that, although upon many points certitude is impossible, the best has been done that is humanly possible, and the approximations are as near as can be necessary for practical purposes. Apart from the fact that this work is more up to date, it is a definite improvement upon all predecessors. M. Pupin is not subtle, but he is often ingenious, and his bridge-building is fully satisfactory. He knows that all one can attempt to give are figures which are "neighbours to reality"—not an absolute picture of existing wealth: but he is clear that for a long time past the wealth of France has been underestimated. He establishes—without discernible political preconceptions or bias—that the share of Capital in the national income is less than that of Work, that the two together may be capitalized at 13 per cent., and that one-tenth of the annual income is saved. In his direct valuation, he is on fairly secure ground until he deals with private trading, when, having no established taxation figures, he falls back upon the classification of establishments according to the number of employees, and uses a multiplier for each grade. English workers along these lines will be interested to see that he adopts house values as a means of estimating the value of furniture (assuming that the value of furniture is equal to the house value for medium sized premises, but adopting fractional values for large and small houses) and the whole value is put at 80 million pounds. The net total of the valuation at 1911 is 11,420,000,000*l*. He then devotes himself to valuation by reference to succession duties, and here perhaps his work is least satisfactory, for he is evidently unacquainted with recent English work upon the "multiplier," and although suggesting useful adjustments in the material of his work, does not grasp some of the fundamental difficulties involved. One has the suspicion borne of envy when his total comes out to within eighty millions of the direct valuation!